**Standard Society Constitution**

**Purpose and Use**

This document serves as the Society Constitution for any Society of the DSU that does not have a unique constitution that meets the requirements laid out in the Society Policy.

Societies may use this Standard Constitution as a template for development of a unique Constitution.

Definitions

Academic Year: The period of time beginning on May 1st of a given year and continuing until April 30th of the following year.

Member: A member of the Society as defined in this Constitution.

Ordinary Resolution: A resolution passed by a simple majority (50% +1) of votes cast on the resolution.

Special Resolution: A resolution passed by a majority of not less than two thirds (2/3) of votes cast on the resolution.

Union: The Dalhousie Student Union (“DSU”)

1. Name
   1. The name of the Society is as written on the application for ratification.
   2. For the purposes of this Constitution, “The Society” refers to the specific Society named on the application for ratification.
2. Purpose and Objectives
   1. The purpose and objectives of the Society are as described in the application for ratification.
   2. The Society’s activities will not infringe on federal, provincial, or municipal laws or Dalhousie University regulations.
   3. The Society’s activities will not infringe upon the Bylaws and Policies of the Union.
3. Membership
   1. Membership in the Society is open to all students enrolled at Dalhousie University.
   2. The society does not place any limits on membership based on age, gender, race, religion, language, or disability.
   3. An individual becomes a Member by attending one (1) meeting of the Society within in Academic Year or by indicating interest in membership to the President of the Society.
   4. Members have the right to:
      1. Run for election as an Executive Officer of the Society.
      2. Vote in all Society elections.
      3. View all of the minutes and financial records of the Society upon request.
      4. Propose motions at General Meetings and Annual General Meetings of the Society.
      5. Attend and vote at General Meetings and Annual General Meetings of the Society.
      6. Attend all other meetings of the Society, including Executive Meetings, as observers.
4. Executive Officers
   1. The Executive Committee will be composed of the President, the Vice-President, and the Treasurer.
   2. At least one (1) Executive Officer must be a member of the Dalhousie Student Union.
   3. The terms of Executive Officers will be May 1st of a given year until April 30th of the following year.
   4. The period of time between Executive Officers being elected and taking office will be the Transition Period. During the Transition Period:
      1. The outgoing President will coordinate transition activities;
      2. The outgoing Executive Officers will meet with the incoming Executive Officers both individually and as a group.
      3. The outgoing Executive Officers will pass on important information, objects and documents including, but not limited to: login information; forms and templates; minutes and agendas; financial records; email accounts; keys; and contact lists.
   5. All Executive Officers must:
      1. Act honestly and in good faith with a view to the best interests of the Society;
      2. Abide by this Constitution; the governing documents of the Dalhousie Student Union; the Dalhousie University Student Code of Conduct; the constitution and policies of any umbrella society that the Society is a member of; and all federal, provincial, and municipal laws;
      3. Prepare a transition report at the end of their term to summarize the work carried out throughout the year and to orient their successor to the position;
      4. Attend all Society meetings, or send regrets in writing in the case of a scheduling conflict.
   6. The President will:
      1. Ensure smooth operation of the Society;
      2. Apply for ratification with the Union each year;
      3. Ensure that Society information ad updates are communicated to Society Members;
      4. Set the agenda for and preside over all meetings of the Society;
      5. Support other Executives in their roles;
      6. Attend anti-oppression training provided by the DSU;
      7. Ensure a smooth transition with the incoming Executive Officers;
      8. Carry out other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee or Members of the Society.
   7. The Vice President will:
      1. Take minutes at all meetings of the Society;
      2. Take on the responsibilities of the President in their absence;
      3. Maintaining a list of Society Members and their contact information;
      4. Carry out other duties as may be assigned by the Executive Committee or Members of the Society.
   8. The Treasurer will:
      1. Prepare the annual budget for the Society;
      2. Keep record of all Society spending in accordance with Union regulations;
      3. Manage the finances of the Society;
      4. Read and understand the DSU Grants Policy and be responsible for applying for DSU Society Grants;
      5. Aid Society Members in applying for DSU Member Grants ;
      6. Take on the responsibilities of the President in the absence of both the President and Vice-President
      7. Attend treasurer training provided by the DSU;
   9. Before taking office, all Executive Officers must acknowledge in writing that they have read this Constitution, the DSU Society Policy, and the Dalhousie University Alcohol Policy ; that they understand the material; and that they agree to abide by these documents and educate Members about them.
   10. Executive Officers will receive honoraria as approved in the budget. Payment of honoraria will be contingent on fulfillment of duties as laid out in this Constitution.
5. Meetings
   1. The Society will hold General Meetings, Executive Meetings, and Annual General Meetings.
   2. All meetings will be conducted in accordance with the most recent version of Robert’s Rules of Order. Where Robert’s Rules of Order conflict with this Constitution or the DSU Society Policy, the Constitution and Society Policy will take precedence.
   3. The President will serve as Chair for all meetings of the Society. Members may vote by Special Resolution to confer the role of Chair to another individual for the purposes of a General or Annual General Meeting.
   4. The Vice President will serve as Secretary for all meetings of the Society. Members may vote by Special Resolution to confer the role of Secretary to another individual for the purposes of a General or Annual General Meeting.
   5. All meetings are open to all Members of the Society.
   6. Unless otherwise required under this Constitution, all motions will be passed by Ordinary Resolution.
   7. Each meeting will begin with a land acknowledgement that recognizes the First Nations, Inuit, and/or Métis territory/ies on which the meeting is taking place.
   8. The following procedures apply to General Meetings:
      1. A General Meeting will be held whenever called by the President or by ordinary resolution of the Executive Committee.
      2. General Meetings occur as needed but at least once per semester.
      3. Quorum consists of at least two (2) Executive Officers and a minimum of five (5) Members who are not Executive Officers.
      4. Notice of a General Meeting must be given at least forty-eight (48) hours in advance of the meeting by emailing all Members and posting on the Society’s social media page(s) and/or website.
      5. Under exceptional circumstances when a matter requires immediate attention, notice may be given twenty-four (24) hours in advance of a General Meeting.
      6. The following standing items will always be on the agenda:
         1. Adoption of the agenda.
         2. Approval of minutes of the last General Meeting.
         3. Reports of Executive Officers.
      7. Any Member may propose a motion to a General Meeting by submitting it writing to the President.
   9. The following procedures apply to Executive Meetings:
      1. An Executive Meeting will be held when called by the President or at the request of the other two Executive Officers, but at least twice per semester.
      2. Executive Meetings are open to any Member to attend as an observer.
      3. Notice of an Executive Meeting will be given to all Executive Officers a minimum of twenty-four (24) hours in advance. This requirement can be waived with the consent of all Executive Officers.
      4. The Executive Committee may vote by Ordinary Resolution to move *in camera*, in accordance with the provisions laid out in Robert’s Rules of Order. Observers may not be present during *in camera* sessions, minutes will not be taken, and any discussion held will be strictly confidential. The only motion that may be voted on during an *in camera* session is the motion to move *ex camera*, thereby ending the *in camera* session.
      5. Quorum consists of a minimum of two (2) Executive Officers, provided that the absent Executive Officer has given written consent for the meeting to proceed in their absence.
   10. The following procedures apply to Annual General Meetings:
       1. An Annual General Meeting will be held once each Academic Year during the winter semester. The date for the Annual General Meeting must be set by Ordinary Resolution at an Executive or General Meeting.
       2. Quorum will be two (2) Executive Officers and a minimum of ten (10) Members who are not Executive Officers.
          1. If, at the time of the Annual General Meeting, the Society has less than ten (10) Members who are not Executive Officers, quorum will be two (2) Executive Officers and a minimum of five (5) Members who are not Executive Officers.
       3. Notice of an Annual General Meeting must be given at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting by emailing all Members and posting on the Society’s social media page(s) and/or website. Said notice must include the agenda for the meeting and any proposed constitutional amendments
       4. The following business will be conducted at the Annual General Meeting:
          1. Presentation of Executive Officers’ year-end reports.
          2. Presentation of the Society’s finances, including information about actual spending throughout the year compared to what was budgeted for.
          3. Election of Executive Officers for the coming Academic Year.
6. Committees
   1. Committees may be struck by Ordinary Resolution at any meeting of the Society.
   2. The motion to strike a committee must include:
      1. The composition of the committee
      2. The process by which committee members will be selected
      3. The purpose of the committee
      4. Reporting requirements
      5. Who will serve as chair of the committee
      6. The committee’s power(s)
   3. The authority of a committee may not exceed that of the body that created it.
7. Elections
   1. Notice of elections, including descriptions of each position available and instructions on how to run, must be given at least two (2) weeks in advance of the date of elections by emailing all Members and posting on the Society’s social media page(s) and/or website.
   2. An Executive Officer who is not running in the elections will serve as Chief Returning Officer. Members in attendance at the Annual General Meeting may vote by Special Resolution to confer the role of Chief Returning Officer to another individual.
      1. If all Executive Officers are running in the elections, the role of Chief Returning Officer will be conferred to an individual who is not an Executive Officer.
      2. If required for the size of the meeting, a Deputy Returning Officer may be appointed to assist the Chief Returning Officer with their tasks.
      3. Neither the Chief Returning Officer nor the Deputy Returning Officer may run in the elections.
   3. The Chief Returning Officer will explain the election process and answer any questions.
   4. Nominations will follow this procedure:
      1. The Chief Returning Officer will seek nominations for each Executive Officer position one at a time.
      2. The Chief Returning Officer will call for nominations three (3) times for each position before closing nominations.
      3. Any Member may self-nominate for a position.
      4. Members may nominate other Members provided the nominee consents to the nomination.
      5. After nominations have been received for all positions, the Chief Returning Officer will read out the names of all nominees and will write them somewhere visible to all meeting attendees. At this point the nominations are confirmed and the nominees become candidates.
   5. Each candidate will be given two (2) minutes to speak to their own nomination. For nominees who are not present in the meeting, their nominator will read a prepared statement or speak on their behalf.
   6. After each candidate for a particular Executive Officer position has spoken, the Chief Returning Officer will open the floor to questions from Members.
      1. All candidates for the position will have an opportunity to respond to each question and will be given equal time to do so.
      2. The Chief Returning Officer may limit the number of questions in the interest of time.
      3. The Chief Returning Officer may reject questions that are unfair, derogatory, irrelevant, or otherwise inappropriate.
   7. Voting will be conducted by secret ballot using the following process:
      1. The Chief Returning Officer will distribute a ballot to each Member and will provide clear instructions about how to vote.
      2. Each Member will vote for one candidate for each position. Members also have the option to abstain from voting for one or more position.
      3. In the case that there is only one candidate running for a particular position, there will be a yes/no vote of confidence.
      4. The Chief Returning Officer will collect completed ballots.
   8. Votes will be counted and results announced using the following process:
      1. All candidates have the option to appoint a scrutineer to witness ballots being counted.
      2. The Chief Returning Officer will count the votes in a separate room from where the meeting is taking place.
      3. The candidate with the most votes for each position will be elected.
      4. The Annual General Meeting may continue with other business while votes are being counted.
      5. When counting is complete, the Chief Returning Officer will return and announce the results of the election.
      6. The Chair will seek a motion to ratify the results and destroy the ballots.
8. Discipline and Impeachment
   1. Any Member wishing to raise a concern or complaint about the Society or the conduct of an Executive Officer may do so by contacting the President. If the concern or complaint is in relation to the President, the Member may contact the Vice-President. Complaints or concerns about the Executive Officers or the Society as a whole may be brought to the DSU Society Review Committee.
   2. Executive Officers may be disciplined for failing to carry out their duties as specified in this Constitution and/or the DSU Society Policy.
   3. A disciplinary motion must be brought to a General Meeting as a Special Resolution.
   4. Notice of the motion to discipline, including a statement of reasons, must be given to the Executive Officer named in the motion at least fourteen (14) days prior to the General Meeting at which it will be debated. The Executive Officer has the right to submit a written statement in response to the motion.
   5. Notice of the motion to discipline, including the statement of reasons and the Executive officer’s written response if applicable, must be given to all Members at least seven (7) days in advance of the General Meeting at which it will be debated by emailing all Members and posting on the Society’s social media page(s) and/or website.
   6. All debate on a motion to discipline will be held *in camera*. The Executive Officer named in the motion must have the opportunity to present their position and respond to concerns.
   7. The following disciplinary measures may be enacted at a General Meeting:
      1. Verbal warning
      2. Written warning
      3. Suspension until specified conditions are met
      4. Impeachment
   8. Impeachment should be considered only after all other efforts to ensure the Executive Officer fulfils their duties have failed.
   9. Voting on a motion to impeach will be carried out by secret ballot.
   10. The Society and Executive Officers are also subject to disciplinary measures that may be imposed from time to time by the DSU Society Review Committee in compliance with the Society Policy.
9. Resignations, Vacancies and By-Elections
   1. An Executive Officer may resign from their role by submitting a written letter of resignation to the President. The President may resign by submitting a written letter of resignation to the Vice-President.
   2. Should an Executive Officer position become vacant prior to February 1st of a given Academic Year, a by-election will be held at a General Meeting within one (1) month of the position being vacated.
   3. Notice of the by-election, including a description of the position(s) available, must be given at least seven (7) days in advance of the meeting by emailing all Members and posting on the Society’s social media page(s) and/or website.
   4. The by-election will be carried out in the same manner as the elections procedure described in this policy.
   5. Should an Executive Officer position become vacant on or after February 1st of a given Academic Year:
      1. The position may remain vacant, with remaining Executive Officers distributing the responsibilities between themselves; OR
      2. A Member may be appointed to fill the role of the Executive Officer on an interim basis until the Annual General Meeting. An interim Executive Officer may be appointed by Special Resolution at a General Meeting.
10. Finances
    1. A budget will be prepared and approved for each Academic Year according to the following process:
       1. The Treasurer will review the budget and actual spending from the previous year, projected revenue for the coming year, and any operational changes that will impact the budget.
       2. The Treasurer will consult with the other Executive Officers and with Members about priorities for the year.
       3. Based on said review and consultation, the Treasurer will develop a draft budget for the Academic Year.
       4. The draft budget must be approved at an Executive Meeting by May 31st of each Academic year and must be ratified by Special Resolution at a General Meeting by October 31st of each Academic Year.
       5. Notice of the date and time of the meeting, including a copy of the draft budget, must be given to all Members at least seven (7) days in advance of the General Meeting at which the budget will be voted on by emailing all Members and posting on the Society’s social media page(s) and/or website.
    2. The budget may be amended throughout the year by Special Resolution at a General Meeting.
    3. The Executive Officers will be signing authorities for the Society.
    4. Each cheque must bear the signatures of two (2) signing authorities.
    5. Signing authorities may not sign cheques made out to themselves.
    6. Documentation for all purchases must be retained.
    7. The Treasurer will ensure that the Society complies with DSU requirements regarding society audits and financial reporting as laid out in the Society Policy and treasurer training.
11. Use of Standard Constitution
    1. Any minor Society-specific variances from the terms laid out in this Constitution are stated on the application for ratification.
    2. The Society may discontinue use of this Constitution when an alternate Constitution that meets the requirements of the DSU Society Policy is approved by Special Resolution at an Annual General Meeting.